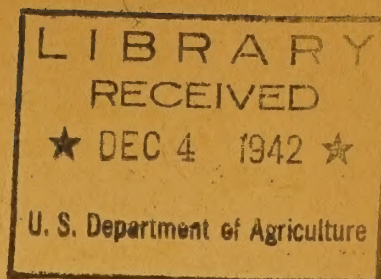


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
EXTENSION SERVICE  
Washington, D. C.



DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of November 2, 1942

(To be remimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday - Patriotic Table Manners Prevent Food Waste. Table manners change with the times. Some 50 years ago it was a mark of refinement and good breeding to leave a little uneaten food on the plate. During the first World War people began to realize that good food left on the plate was wasteful and it became the patriotic thing to eat everything that was served except plainly inedible parts, such as bones. Under war conditions, home economists of the Department of Agriculture are again encouraging the fight against food waste in the home. Whims about food or bad seasoning cause a lot of waste. Time was when it was considered inelegant to use bread to take up gravy or vegetable juices on the plate. But today we try to eat all those juices and the good gravy, and sometimes the best way to do so is to get them up with a piece of bread. In most parts of the country, it is now considered correct to take fried or roast chicken bones up in the fingers to get all the meat from them. Another question now settled by public opinion is the cutting up of lettuce. It is not only permissible, but desirable, to prevent the waste of lettuce left on the salad plate. Eating the skins of baked potatoes also saves food value. Custom once forbade stirring coffee or tea with a spoon, but today when sugar is used in beverages, it is necessary to stir them or you are plainly unpatriotic, and likely to run short of sugar, too. We might also go back to slicing the loaf of bread at the table as was done during the last war when wheat was scarce. Another idea that has charged is about eating between meals. Today we know that a snack of milk and fruit or cookies may be just the nourishment needed by the school child in the afternoon.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first question today is about buying meat. The letter says: "Please tell me whether the beef and veal now sold in meat markets and butcher shops is graded as to quality." Marketing specialists of the Department say much of the beef and veal now selling over retail counters is graded. According to a Government order of September 18, meat packers must have all beef and veal selling as U.S. Choice graded by Federal standards, but this order applies only to the top grade. That which has been graded carries the purple stamp showing the Government grade. Another question: "Will the shortage of tin cans make it difficult to get sauerkraut this fall?" There should be plenty of sauerkraut on the market in spite of the shortage of tin cans, because the packers have gone back to using the wooden barrels again. Many people claim the flavor is better when the kraut is packed in these wooden barrels. The last question: "Can you tell me what makes the skins of the dried beans I cook tough?" The trouble may be due to hard water, which toughens the skins of beans. Old-time cooks discovered this and used rain water. Here are simple rules for cooking dried beans. Pick them over and throw out bad ones. Wash in cold water and soak overnight. Then cook them in the soaking water. Don't add soda, as it destroys vitamins. Cook the beans over low heat and add water as needed. Try different ways of seasoning. Tomatoes, onions, pork, molasses, and mustard, are all good with

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beans. A free folder on this subject, Dried Beans and Peas in Low Cost Meals, can be had by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

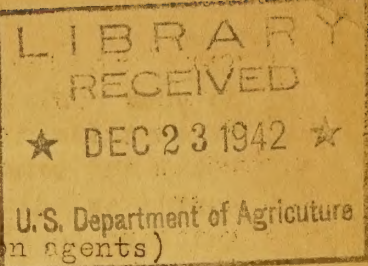
Wednesday - Sweetpotatoes. The sweetpotato is rich in food value. It contains vitamin A, thiamin, vitamin C, iron, protein, sugar, and starch. Sweetpotatoes are hard to store, but you will use them so often that you won't have to store them long. On the menu they are interchangeable with white potatoes, because both are starchy and bulky. About 70 million bushels of sweetpotatoes are pouring into the national larder this year. They may be served in numerous ways - baked, boiled, steamed, fried, or mashed. They are excellent as a meat accompaniment, or, to satisfy the sweet tooth, you can serve them candied or made into a pie.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today is from a housewife who is tending her own furnace this year for the first time. She wants to know if it is a good idea to put ashes on the fire to keep it from burning too fast. Heating engineers say, No. To get the furnace fire to the temperature desired, adjust the draft doors and the dampers of the furnace. For a cool, slow-burning fire, close the ashpit draft door and so cut off the draft under the fire, and open the check damper and fire-door damper. For a hot fire, open the draft door to the ashpit and close the check damper. A layer of ashes under the fire-bed and just on top of the grate makes a slow-burning fire. You can adjust this layer by shaking the fire. When the fire is banked at night, this ash-bed should be from 2 to 6 inches deep, depending on how hot a fire you wish. Keep the ash-pit cleaned out and you will get better service from the furnace. For more information on operating a coal furnace write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for Farmers' Bulletin No. 1698, Heating the Farm House. The second question is from a woman who asks, "How does a beginner at carpentry and plumbing know which way to turn a screw?" Engineers say the rule to remember when dealing with any ordinary screw, nut, or bolt is this - to screw in or tighten, turn the screw in the same direction that the hands of the clock move. To loosen, turn counter-clockwise. Another question: "How often does a hot-water tank need flushing out?" This depends on how fast sediment collects in the tank. Test by running off a little water from the spigot in the bottom of the tank. If the water runs muddy or rusty, the tank needs flushing. The last question today: "Does the motor of an electric refrigerator ever need oiling?" A refrigerator with an open-type mechanical unit, will need oiling according to the manufacturer's directions. Always disconnect the refrigerator when oiling this type of machine. A sealed-in unit does not need regular oiling, because it is permanently oiled before it leaves the factory.



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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Digest of Homemakers' Chats for Week of November 16, 1942

(To be re-mimeographed and distributed to home demonstration agents)

Monday - Tree Nuts. It's nut-gathering time throughout the entire country, and tree nuts are on the list of foods that help round out the food supply on the home front. They are a Victory Food Special from November 9 through 21. Nuts are not only rich in fat but they have protein, phosphorus, and iron, and most of them furnish the "appetito" vitamins of the B group. Plan to use nuts in your menus. Since they are a concentrated food, work them in as part of the meal rather than as an extra with the dessert. Nuts are good mixed with cooked vegetables such as sweetpotatoes, cauliflower, and others; They can be added to a whole list of desserts, or used in stuffings to help stretch the meat. Try them in waffles, cakes, cookies, pies, and in nut bread. Nuts are a dry food and will take up moisture from batter or dough, so before adding them to a standard muffin, bread, or cake mixture, pour boiling water over the nuts and let them stand a few minutes. Drain off the water before you add them to the mixture. In a standard recipe for biscuit, waffles, or cookies, use one-fourth to one-half cup of chopped nuts to each cup of flour. A free leaflet called "Nuts and Ways To Use Them," publication No. 302, can be obtained from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Tuesday - Question Box. The mail bag today contains questions on various subjects. The first is about gardens. A housewife writes: "Please tell me whether there is any fruit I can plant this fall and have bearing as soon as next year." Garden advisors say, Yes, strawberries, and they have many advantages. They bear soon after planting, need little care, will grow in almost any part of the country and in many different soils, they are the first fruit to ripen in the spring, and they are rich in vitamin C. Then too, they are delicious tasting and of a pleasing color. Another home gardener asks: "Is it possible to grow fresh greens in coldframes for winter meals?" The answer to that depends on where you live. It can't be done in the North where the winters are severe, but if the climate is mild and the temperature rarely falls below 15 degrees, then greens will thrive in coldframes all winter. From gardening we turn to cooking. A housewife asks for directions for making pastry with nuts. From cookery experts come these directions. Use nuts, like pecans or black walnuts, that are rich in fat and grind them fine. Use any good recipe for plain pastry. Then just substitute the ground nuts for half the fat the recipe calls for. Mix and bake just like plain pastry. Nut crust is very good with cream filling and you can sprinkle chopped nuts over the top of the meringue just before serving the pie. This crust could be used for pumpkin pie, but the spice in the pumpkin mixture is likely to mask the nut flavor. And now for the last question. A housewife asks: "Can you tell me how to look after my electric washer so it will stay in good condition for many years?" The answer to this letter is a leaflet called "How To Make Your Washing Machine Last Longer." Send a postal card to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for a free copy.

Wednesday - The Thanksgiving Food Basket. This year, turkey is one of the mainstays for fall and winter meals, and is helping to stretch the meat supply so that other meat can go to our service men and allies over seas. Chicken also helps in the same way, so keep both chicken and turkey in mind when you



do your marketing the rest of the year. A large turkey is economical because it contains more meat in proportion to bone than several small turkeys that total the same weight. After it comes to the table as roast turkey, it can be served as cold sliced turkey, then in croquettes, or scalloped, or in sandwiches. And last of all, in hash and soup. Government poultry scientists have developed a streamlined turkey called apartment-sized, or kitchenette, which has a large supply of breast and leg meat even though it is small in size and has a light frame. More turkeys will carry Government grades this year than ever before. The best ones get the label "US PRIME," the second grade "US CHOICE," and the third grade "US COMMERCIAL." When you buy turkey without grade labels, choose a bird with plump, broad, flat breasts and with thighs, back, and bones covered with a thick layer of flesh. You may load your basket this year with many other foods that naturally belong with an old-fashioned Thanksgiving, such as cranberries, sweetpotatoes, squash, pumpkin, sauerkraut, nuts, and apples. These too are helping to keep the Nation's food supply well-balanced, and by using more of them here at home, you spare other foods to go to the battlefronts.

Thursday - Question Box. Our first letter today is from a homemaker who lives in a small town. She says the grocer is often out of oranges and grapefruit, and that dried and canned fruits and tomato juice are also scarce. She has home-canned fruit which the family had counted on for desserts. So she asks: "What can we have for breakfast fruit this winter?" Well, you can have apples, for one thing, and grapes. Serve apples baked, fried, or as applesauce. You can cook cranberries for juice for breakfast and use part honey or sirup for sweetening. Hot water and lemon juice with very little sweetening is a favorite with many. Then fruit for breakfast is not essential if enough foods rich in vitamin C are served at some time during the day. The second question: "How can I cook cranberries without using a great deal of sugar?" A few weeks ago the food specialists suggested using cranberries for juice, and making them into a sauce, sweetened with part honey and part sugar. You can serve cranberry sauce on ice cream, on puddings, and in fruit salads. Use cranberries in shortcake and muffins, and here is a relish: Grind 1 pound of washed and drained cranberries with 1 whole orange, using pulp and rind. Mix with three-fourths to 1 cup of strained honey, and add one-fourth teaspoon of salt. Mix well. This relish keeps 2 or 3 weeks if stored in a tight jar in the refrigerator. Now for the last question: "How do you make cornbread stuffing?" For a 5-pound bird you'll need three-fourths cup of chopped celery, one-fourth cup of chopped parsley, and one small chopped onion, all cooked together for a few minutes in 6 tablespoons of melted butter or other fat. Add 1 quart of cornbread crumbs. Season with one-fourth to one-half teaspoon of thyme, and salt. Mix well and stuff into the bird.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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Washington, D. C.

★ NOV 27 1942 ★

DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of November 9, 1942

U. S. Department of Agriculture

(To be remimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday - Game as a Menu Aid. Cottontails, squirrels, partridge, pheasants, ducks, and big game animals like deer and elk are all good eating, and they can help pinch-hit for other meat in localities where they are available. Foresters of the U. S. Department of Agriculture report that big game animals in the national forests have doubled in number about every 10 years since 1908. The Forest Service estimates that the annual increase of deer and elk alone in the national forests could provide the equivalent of a year's liberal meat diet for 225 thousand persons, without reducing the size of the herds. This year the Government is asking hunters to save fats from game animals, empty shotgun shells and rifle cartridges, and the down of waterfowl. To save every bit of game, the surplus should be canned or cured and salted the same as pork or beef. In cooking game, the same principles should be used as in cooking other meat. Tender cuts cook best with dry heat and less tender cuts with slow moist heat. The general methods for roasting meat apply equally well to game birds. You can use various dressings and flavorings in roasting birds to suit the individual taste.

Tuesday - Question Box. More questions from housewives today. In the first letter we are asked if distilled water would give better results than hard water in making yeast bread. Scientists at the Wyoming Experiment Station recently found that fairly hard water made better bread than distilled water. Distilled water softened the gluten in the flour so much that the dough became sticky and the loaf smaller. Very hard water may toughen the gluten, so if your water is extremely hard you may get better bread by not using so much water in it. Try milk or potato water. Milk not only gives better bread, but it also supplies some calcium. In the second question, a housewife wants to know how cabbage and onions compare as to vitamins. Cabbage - especially raw but also cooked - supplies two important vitamins, but you can't count much on onions. Cabbage is rich in vitamin C and is good in vitamin B-1. Onions contain rather small amounts of these important vitamins but they are good food and especially useful for the flavor they give to meals. A woman who is going to a tropical climate writes to ask what kind of clothes would be best for use there. She asks "How sunlight and heat affect rayon." Sunshine and heat do have some effect on the color and strength of certain kinds of rayon, but it is slight compared to the damaging effect on pure silk. Sunlight will not turn white rayon yellow. Rayons would be more serviceable than silk in a hot climate, but cottons are the favorite materials. Another question on rayon is from a housewife who asks for directions for safely washing rayon. Many ready-to-wear garments of rayon carry a tag telling just how to wash the fabric, and it is wise to follow such directions. Most synthetic fabrics can be laundered safely like this. Dissolve mild soap in lukewarm water. Then put in the fabric. Squeeze the sudsy water through the garment. Never twist, rub, wring, or handle roughly. Rinse in lukewarm water. Squeeze out moisture. Roll in a towel to take out excess moisture. Unroll and stretch the garment to proper size and shape. Dry it flat. Press when nearly dry on the wrong side with a warm iron.

Wednesday - Feathers for Fighters. Because feathers are light in weight yet warm and soft, they have extra value in wartime. Our armed forces are using feathers by hundreds of tons for sleeping bags, quilts, hospital pillows, suits for aviators, and for other products that must be light, warm, and soft.



Down from waterfowl makes the filling for sleeping bags. The story goes that one reason Russian soldiers stood last winter better than the Germans is that they had down sleeping bags, and their coats had down linings. The coarser duck and goose feathers are used for hospital pillows for our armed forces. And chicken feathers, too, are stuffing the upholstery and pillows for civilians these days. The Government has first call on waterfowl feathers and down, so down is out for civilians for the duration. Government specifications call for new feathers only - clean, never-used feathers. One of the new products on the market is a quilt of curled chicken feathers. A light feather quilt weighing about 7 pounds is equal in warmth to two or three heavy wool blankets. Any smart housewife on a farm could make light, warm, bedcoverings for her family, using the softer feathers. A cover of sateen or other closely woven material should be used so the feathers will not work through. All this fuss about feathers is also a tip-off to the housewife to care for the feather articles she has. Keep them clean and protected from moths. Directions for washing pillows are in a bulletin on home laundry of the USDA. Down quilts with silk or rayon covers are best dry-cleaned. But they won't need cleaning often if you sun, air, and fluff them up often. Lay them on top of the bed; don't waste the down by tucking under the mattress.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today: "Are there any ways to manage an automatic gas water heater so that we can use less gas?" Have a serviceman adjust the automatic thermostat so the water doesn't heat over 125° F. Never draw more hot water than you need for baths or showers. If the heater has a thermostat that you can adjust yourself, you could raise the temperature of the water for a few hours 1 day a week for laundry work. You could plan to concentrate any other tasks requiring extra-hot water in the hours the heater was up. If you need boiling water for rinsing dishes, heat it in a teakettle. And lastly, insulate your hot-water storage tank. The next question is from a woman who has heard you can use blackout curtains to make a room warmer. She writes that she doesn't understand this, since it would make the room completely dark. Actually you don't use blackout curtains, but insulating board, to increase warmth in a cold room. The insulating board is fitted onto the outside of the window, covering the upper half during the daytime and there is still light through the lower pane. A movable frame of insulating board made to fit over the lower half of the window on the inside is used at night. You will be ready for a surprise blackout, and the room will be warmer. And now for a question about shoes. "As a result of Federal specifications, Army shoes are expected to wear from 10 to 15 percent longer. Can anything be done to give civilians a similar break?" Men civilians will get a "break" on those very specifications. Tanners don't know whether the hides they process are for Government or civilian shoes. They treat all leather of the heavier weights to meet the specifications. Soon civilians may be able to buy shoes with improved soles that will wear longer. Next comes a question about cooking chicken - the less tender birds sold in stores as "fowl." This housewife says her family is tired of fricasseed chicken and she would like to know other ways to cook a tough fowl. First of all, such a fowl needs long, slow cooking in water or steam to make it tender. After that, try cooking some dumplings in gravy, then put in the chicken pieces. Another way is to put the chicken and its own gravy into a deep baking dish and top it with biscuits to make a pie. Why not serve your cooked chicken creamed, or with a sauce seasoned with curry? Serve it chopped as a salad, chicken a la king, or ground and made into chicken loaf, souffle, timbales, croquettes, or jellied, or shredded for chop suey. To use larger chopped pieces, cook rice in some of the chicken broth and add the chicken when the rice is about done. This is chicken rizotto. For recipes on these write to the United States Department of Agriculture for a copy of Farmers' Bulletin 1888, Poultry Cooking.



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Digest of Homemakers' Chats for Week of November 16, 1942

(To be re-mimeographed and distributed to home demonstration agents)

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Digest of Homemakers' Chats for week of Nov. 23, 1942

(To be rememeographed and distributed to Home demonstration agents)  
(Not for broadcasting)

Monday - Saving and Sharing To Help Win the War. There isn't a group of women in our whole Nation taking the war effort more to heart than farm women. Many had already learned from necessity to stretch their income through careful planning of home budgets, guarding the strength and health of their families by providing the right foods, and saving through home workmanship and repairs. These women know that factories that work for war cannot work to add unnecessary comforts and beauty to their homes. So they have learned to do more things than ever for themselves. Thousands have always baked bread. Now many are growing their own sugar to meet the sugar shortage. Seventy thousand small farmers in Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida began to cultivate their own sugarcane and sorghum this summer. Other families in most parts of the country keep bees for honey and still others, especially in New England, tap maple trees for juice. A number of families grind their own wheat, corn and other grains. Many farm women are making cheese from surplus milk, and providing this nutritious food for the family. Farm women are getting together to discuss their war-shortage problems cooperatively, holding "taste-test schools" where they learn to prepare soybeans, peanuts, and other crops, attractively, or "wartime idea pools" to exchange homemaking suggestions. Many are sharing equipment, such as pressure cookers, sewing machines, and washing machines.

Tuesday - Question Box. A correspondent writes: "I have read that on November 7 the Government put turkeys under permanent price ceilings. Does this mean the price I pay for my turkey will depend on its quality and, if so, how can I tell the price is right for the grade I get?" Marketing specialists in USDA say the price of turkey should correspond to the quality you purchase. Every turkey gets a grade of A, B, or C, according to USDA standards. Prices within a grade may vary. The price ceiling will depend on the age of the turkey, its weight, and the class of the store where you buy. Check the quality by looking for a tag or mark. This will say either Grade A, B, or C, or U.S. Grade A, B, or C, the U.S. indicating that Government graders did the grading. Grade A, or U.S. Prime is the first quality, Grade B or U.S. Choice is second best, and Grade C or U.S. Commercial is third grade. Above these 3 regular grades is the extra fancy turkey, marked U.S. Special or U.S. Grade AA. No special price ceiling is set for this fancy bird. If there is no tag, ask to see the container in which the turkey was shipped from the wholesaler. Changes in ceiling prices are made only on Thursdays and are posted by the grocer. Ceiling prices are also set on onions and potatoes. A second housewife wants to know how to clean scorched grease from an enamel-lined oven. First, wash the enamel lining with warm, soapy water, rub with a fine scouring powder, like whiting. As a last resort, scour the burned places with fine steel wool. Once the oven is scoured clean, wash it with soap and water again, rinse with clean water, dry with a soft, dry cloth. Enamel is delicate, cracks and chips easily, so never use a knife or rough scraper on it. Every time after using the oven, leave the door open until it cools. This allows steam, odors, and greasy vapor to escape.



Wednesday - Question Box. This is a special question-and-answer day to take care of the holiday food problems for tomorrow. The first question - "Would it be too much to serve cranberry cocktail if I serve cranberry sauce with the Thanksgiving dinner?" Cranberry cocktail is an excellent choice, and you might as well make the sauce, too, since it is more or less expected. To make the cocktail, cover the berries with 3 or 4 cups of water to each pound of cranberries, cook until tender, put through a sieve, and strain through cheesecloth. Sweeten to taste, add a little salt, and dilute with water or ginger ale. Chill before serving. The next question: "Is it all right to stuff the turkey the day before Thanksgiving?" This can be done if the stuffed bird is kept in the refrigerator or a very cold place overnight. Or better still, you can make the stuffing the day before and keep it in a bowl in the refrigerator ready to go into the turkey the first thing in the morning. In this way the flesh of the turkey does not absorb too much of the seasoning in the stuffing. Another housewife writes: "Please tell me the correct way to prepare giblets for gravy." Wash all the giblets in cold water. Put the gizzard and heart on to cook first in lightly salted water. Simmer for about 2 hours, then add the liver, and continue cooking until all are tender. Grind or chop the giblets, then make the gravy as you would from any roast, adding the chopped giblets last of all. And now for dessert. A housewife asks: "How can I prepare fresh pumpkin for pie?" Pare the pumpkin and cut it in pieces. Boil in very little water until tender, then press the pumpkin through a sieve. Cook the sieved pumpkin in the upper part of a double boiler until it is dry enough to use in pies. This should be done the day before the holiday, also. And last, "Is there any way to remove the kernels from black walnuts and hickory nuts easily?" If the nuts are so dry that the kernel breaks up when you crack them, try soaking them overnight in warm water. Then drain and dry them for about an hour. This toughens them, and they will crack more easily and the kernels will come out better. Hit hickory nuts and black walnuts on the edge, and butternuts on the end when cracking them.

Thursday - A Time To Give Thanks ... And a Look Ahead. A few weeks ago in speaking to a group of farmers on the occasion of their Thanksgiving Harvest Observance, Secretary of Agriculture Wickard said, "We have much to be thankful for in the year that is ending. This truly has been a wonderful year ... more food, greater yields of cotton ... more of nearly every other product than our farm land ever produced in the past." Turning from this thought to facts and figures, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Department says that food production for 1942 is the largest on record so far. All the people who worked on farms raised 27 percent more food than the prewar average for 1935-39, and 10 percent more than in 1941. The biggest increases were in truck crops, sugar crops, meat animals, and poultry. The food supply for 1943 may be larger than in previous years, but a large part of it will go to our Allies and our military forces, so there will be less for civilians than in 1941 or 1942. There will be an ample supply of cereals, larger supplies of poultry and eggs, than in any recent year, and more meat than the prewar average, but probably less beef and more pork than this year. Forecasters see plenty of sweetpotatoes and dried beans, but some reduction in table fats and shortening. Fresh fruits and vegetables in 1943 will depend on how near you are to a market for winter-produced fruits and vegetables. Economists and nutritionists say the food value of our civilian supplies for 1943 appears to be about as good as the average for 1935-36.